

MINUTES OF COMMUNITY PRESENTATION

Date: July 15, 2014
Time: 6:00 pm
Project: Veterans Park Shelter Renovations
Mecklenburg County Parks and Recreation
Location: Veterans Park

Lee Jones, with Mecklenburg County Park and Recreation opened the meeting with introductions and then Steve Sweat, the project manager for Mecklenburg County Business and Support Services, Asset and Facility Management gave a brief overview of the scope of the project. Mary Isaacs, with Isaacs + Associates Architects began the presentation by identifying existing conditions and concerns that the project addresses and then Amanda Keske discussed the two proposed options and possible materials. An outline of the presentation is as follows:

Slide 1: Welcome

Slide 2: Existing Park

- Show Aerial view of overall site plan with existing amenities noted (items to be identified include tennis courts, ball field, parking lot, indoor shelter, outdoor picnic shelters, ball fields, sprayground, large shade trees, picnic tables, benches...)

Slide 3: Site Issues

BULLET POINT	DISCUSSION
Way Finding	Point out that route to restrooms and indoor shelter not clear
Storm Water Runoff	Storm water from paved parking and layout space at adjacent Armory flows down to paved area behind the shelter and then spills out into play areas
Insufficient Landscaping	While there are beautiful large shade trees that will remain existing groundcover is insufficient to address stormwater and in few locations where planting exists around perimeter fence it is "scraggly" –
Location & quantity of picnic tables and benches	In addition to tables at the outdoor shelters there are some picnic tables but locations – one is in sunny spot and others next to parking area- make them uninviting for use. Park patrons like to use tables under covered patio area at indoor shelter – convenient to the sprayground – problematic since covered area is part of rental space

Slide 4 & 5: Indoor Shelter/Restroom Facility Issues

BULLET POINT	DISCUSSION
Unappealing building aesthetic	"Mushroom" – top heavy and dark below - overpowering roof structure, heavy doors, "cold/hard" materials
No clear entry to shelter	all the doors look the same, no entry canopy
No connection to park setting	Building looks like it was plopped down in the park – no transition space materials cold/hard contrast Once inside once inside lack of relationship even more apparent-no views or natural light – nothing to indicate that facility is in a park – could be a storage building for the army reserve campus next door.
No clear delineation between Rental and Public spaces	issues with covered patio and restrooms
Restroom entry not visible from majority of Park spaces	There is one accessible toilet inside the shelter but it is not readily available for general park patrons, toilet doors open into rental space
Restrooms not handicap accessible	There is one unisex handicap accessible toilet that is available to shelter rental patrons but is not available for use by general park patrons
Inefficient space layout	"awkward" may be better description – no transition from the exterior - exterior doors enter directly into the assembly space or the storage room, have to go thru the kitchen space to access storage as well as the accessible restroom
Finishes	Interior finishes are old and unappealing, Kitchen equip outdated
Security	Access to Assembly space from restrooms, covered patio area used at night by the homeless, inadequate security system – no cameras
Mechanical and Electrical	Upgrades needed - exist HVAC is residential type

Slide 6: Proposed Site Options

BULLET POINT	DISCUSSION
Re-work sidewalks, driveway and rear parking lot	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create organic flowing walkway towards shelter • Remove Driveway, but keep an area to unload • Remove unused rear parking lot to help with runoff
Outdoor Patio	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alleviate conflict between rental and open park space • Secured with privacy fence or combination of privacy fence and green screen. • Obscure neighboring views with multi-layered plant material. • Opportunity to extend rental space while creating desirable views from the interior of the rental space

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Install pervious paver system for gathering area and a drainage system to help direct runoff waters
Landscaping	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plant beds will flank building • foot traffic with be deterred by groundcover • protect the mature/healthy/shading trees on site.
Way-Finding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Signage to be added at parking lot and building • To help draw the eye away from the building and to empathize the main walkway for the park, flag pole area will be established

Slide 7&8: Proposed Building Options

BULLET POINT	DISCUSSION
Shelter Entry and Public Restrooms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shelter entry to be more pronounced by vertical elements and patio • Public restrooms to be treated as a separate function of the shelter entirely • Moved away from entry • and will be visually noticeable from park functions
Create a functional floor plan	
Entry Area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accessible restrooms, drinking fountains, maintenance closet and utility closet
Assembly Area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Functions that area accessible from meeting area are storage and warming kitchen. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The warming kitchen will have exterior access for catering • Enclosed the existing covered patio to increase meeting space
Overall improvements to space	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finishes to be updated • Update mechanical, electrical (including interior and exterior lighting) and security system • Natural lighting • Views will be redirected

Slide 9&10: Animations for Options A and B

Slide 11&12: Materials

BULLET POINT	DISCUSSION
Exterior materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aluminum screens • Green walls • Pervious paver systems and walls
Additional Exterior seating	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take advantage of the existing mature trees and create some seating • Varying sizes of seating

Slide 13: Thank you and Open the floor for questions

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Overall, options A and B were well received at the meeting and no preference was noted. Concerns that were expressed during meeting relate to both options. Those concerns are as follows:

1. Concern was expressed regarding the number of proposed restrooms for the park patrons (1 male and 1 female). It was noted that there are times (primarily when the spray-ground is open) that the existing restroom facilities (2 stalls and 1 sink in men's and women's) are not adequate.
 - Isaacs + Associate Architects will explore options at front elevation of shelter and option to create a separate structure with the County.
 - Parks and Recreation will look into the possibility of additional funding.
2. The attendees liked the outdoor patio concept and design, but would like to keep the division between park views and renters transparent.
 - The separation is necessary to deter park patrons from accessing the outdoor patio. Isaacs + Associates will look into additional screening/fencing materials for the outdoor patio to allow park views to be experienced.
3. A concern was expressed regarding access by Park & Rec vehicles to the shelter to load large trash bags for transport to the dumpster on the far side of parking lot.
 - Isaacs + Associates will discuss this further with the county and landscape architect.
4. It was mentioned that the existing plaque/memorial to the veteran aviator is out of the way and cannot be readily viewed by park patrons.
 - It was agreed that it should be celebrated in the renovation in some way.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:10 p.m.

These minutes convey our understanding of the items discussed and/or decisions reached during this meeting. Any changes or additions should be brought to our attention immediately.